

STAR WARS® DARTH VADER

MARVEL

GILLEN
LARROCA
DELGADO

009



delgado
delgado

Book II, Part III
SHADOWS AND SECRETS

It is a period of insurgence. After the destruction of the Death Star by a Force-strong rebel pilot, the Sith Lord DARTH VADER was deemed responsible by his master, Emperor Palpatine. Enlisting the help of archaeologist DOCTOR APHRA and droids, Beete and Triple-Zero, Vader is able to pursue his own agenda under the Empire's ever watchful eye.

Using the expertise of Aphra and a carefully selected crew of bounty hunters, Vader looted a stash of credits from an Imperial cruiser under the guise of an accident. Complete with a droid army, a team of bounty hunters, and an Imperial fortune on hand, Vader is one step closer to finding the rebel pilot.

Now in the Anthan system, Vader's new adjutant Imperial Inspector Thanoth gets to the bottom of what happened on the ill-fated Imperial cruiser....

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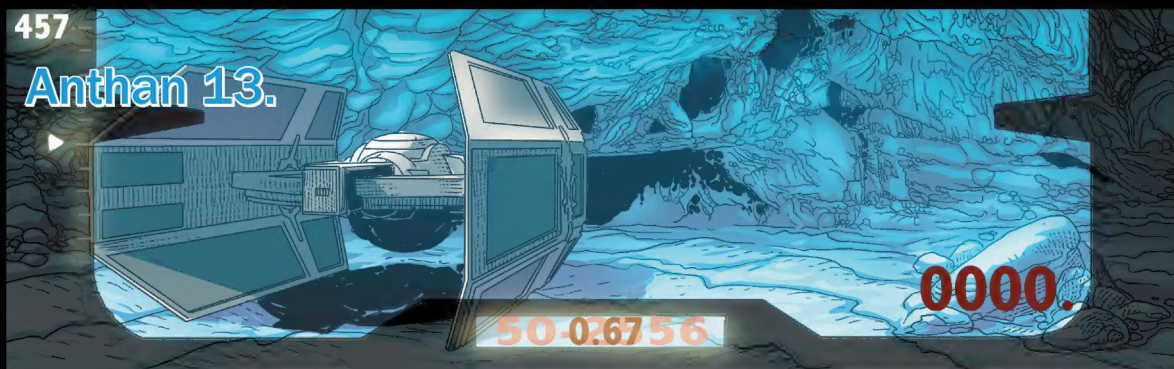
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Anthan 13.



THE
REBELLION
HAS MANY
FAILINGS.

YOUR
SLOWNESS
IS MOST
AGGRAVATING.



Anthan Prime
Orbital Dockyard.



THANOTH TO
VADER...

WHAT
IS IT?

I'M SET
UP ON
ANTHAN PRIME.
I NEED YOUR
ASSISTANCE,
IMMEDIATELY.

I BELIEVE
I HAVE A
LEAD TO THOSE
RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE
ROBBERY...



WHAT MADE YOU SO SURE IT WAS A CRIME AND NOT AN ACCIDENT?

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN. ACCIDENTS CAN BE **MADE** TO HAPPEN. TAGGE WANTED ME TO HAVE A CLOSER LOOK. HE HAD ALREADY BUDGETED THOSE RESOURCES TOWARDS A SUPER STAR DESTROYER.

YOU KNOW TAGGE AND HIS SUPER STAR DESTROYERS.



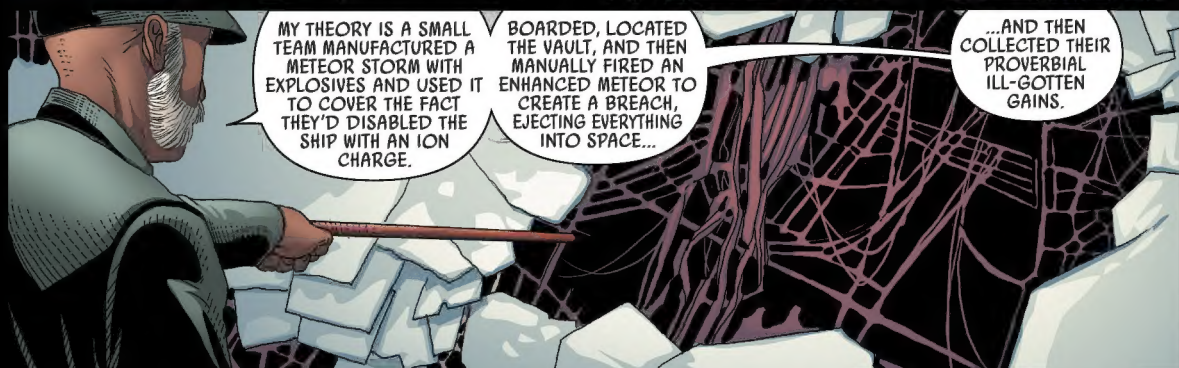
I EXAMINED ITS SYSTEMS. THERE WAS NO SIGN OF INTERFERENCE. IN FACT, SUSPICIOUSLY LITTLE SIGN OF INTERFERENCE.

WITH A METEOR STRIKE, I'D HAVE EXPECTED MUCH MORE BASAL DISRUPTION. I SUSPECT THE LOGS WERE RESET TO FACTORY DEFAULTS BY THE CRIMINALS TO COVER THEIR ACTIONS.



I WAS SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THE MAIN PENETRATION, TOO. NOT WHAT I'D HAVE EXPECTED FROM A NORMAL ASTEROID.

IT'D HAVE REQUIRED AN UNUSUALLY HIGH METAL CONTENT...



MY THEORY IS A SMALL TEAM MANUFACTURED A METEOR STORM WITH EXPLOSIVES AND USED IT TO COVER THE FACT THEY'D DISABLED THE SHIP WITH AN ION CHARGE.

BOARDED, LOCATED THE VAULT, AND THEN MANUALLY FIRED AN ENHANCED METEOR TO CREATE A BREACH, EJECTING EVERYTHING INTO SPACE...

...AND THEN COLLECTED THEIR PROVERBIAL ILL-GOTTEN GAINS.



BUT YOU COULD BE MISTAKEN...

I CAN'T BE **SURE**, BUT IT SEEMS LOGICAL ENOUGH.



I HOPE YOU ARE CORRECT.

MY TIME IS TOO PRECIOUS TO SPEND CHASING PHANTOMS.



I AGREE,
FOR BOTH OF US.
FRANKLY, LOCATING EVEN
A SIZEABLE FORTUNE
FEELS A LITTLE
BENEATH US...

STILL--WHILE
THESE CRIMINALS ARE
PROFESSIONAL, THEY DIDN'T
CONSIDER PEOPLE OF OUR
CALIBER WOULD BE AFTER THEM.
WE CAN FINISH THIS QUICKLY
AND RETURN TO MORE
SERIOUS WORK.



ACTUALLY,
REGARDING WORK.
I DID MEAN TO
ASK....

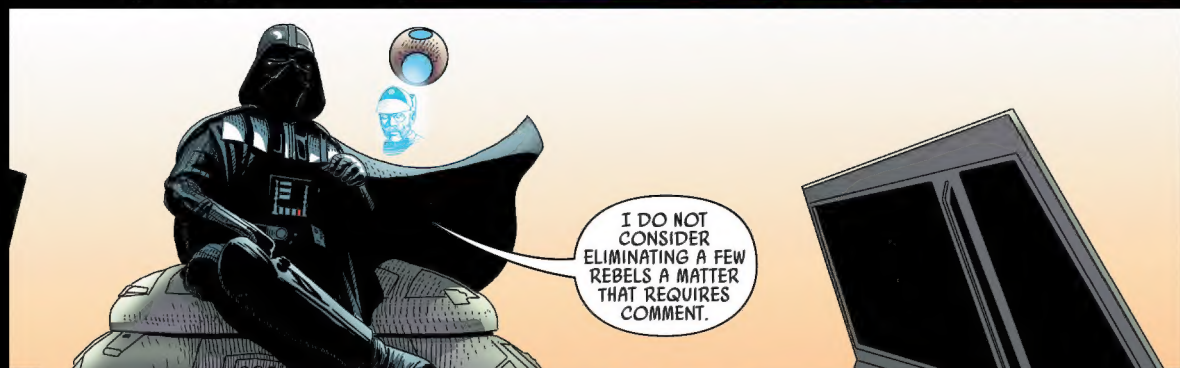
YOU WOULD
HAVE BEEN ON ANTHAN
PRIME TO OVERSEE THE
TRANSFER OF THE
SHIPMENT--WHAT ACTUALLY
BROUGHT YOU TO
ANTHAN 13?



I PURSUED
A REBEL CELL
THERE.

I DEALT
WITH THEM.

IT WASN'T
REPORTED.



I DO NOT
CONSIDER
ELIMINATING A FEW
REBELS A MATTER
THAT REQUIRES
COMMENT.



IF YOU
WISH, YOU MAY
GO AND SEE THE
REMAINS
YOURSELF.

Far Beneath Anthan Prime.

WHOM
DO WE
SEEK?

EVENTUALLY?
A GENTLEMAN WHO
GOES BY "THE DRAGON."
MOST INFAMOUS OF
THE ARMS DEALERS IN THE
AREA. IF THEY GOT
EXPLOSIVES, IT WOULD
HAVE BEEN
THROUGH HIM.

ONE OF
HIS DEALERS WILL
BE HERE. DOOWAN.
A SOMEWHAT COARSE
GENTLEMAN WHO I
SUSPECT WILL
REQUIRE A LITTLE
PERSUASION.

AND
WHERE IS
"HERE"?

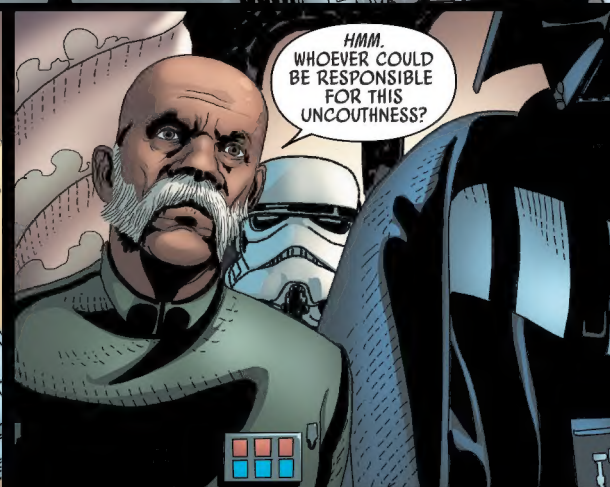
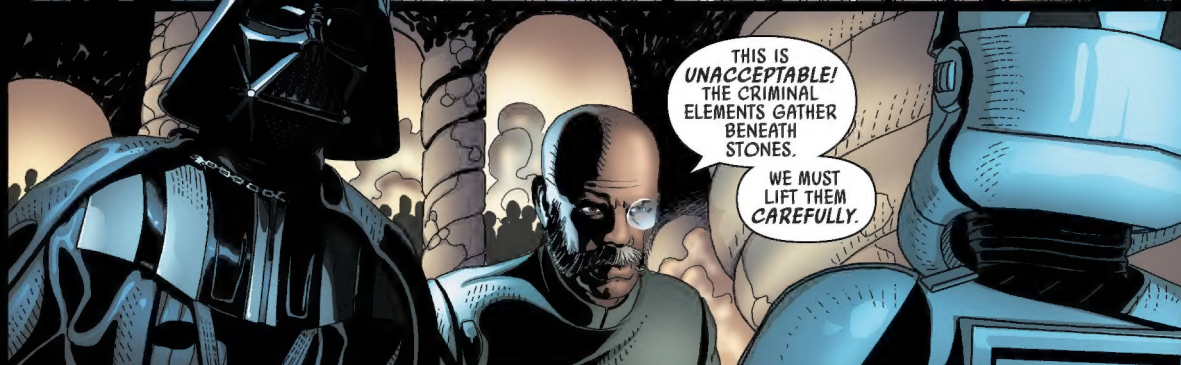
A DROID
FIGHTING DEN.
ACTUAL BLOOD FIGHTS
ARE ILLEGAL ON ANTHAN.
AS SUCH, THEY HAVE
GRAY ESTABLISHMENTS
THAT TICKLE
THAT URGE.

"GRAY"?

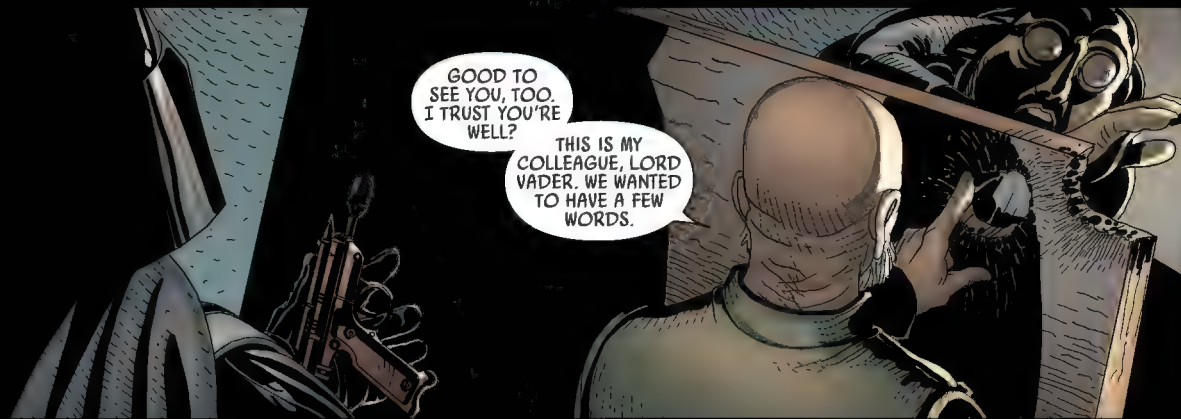
THE ATTRACTIONS
ARE JUST ABOUT LEGAL.
THE CLIENTELE IS ENTIRELY NOT,
WHICH MAKES IT AN EXCELLENT
PLACE FOR LOCATING
ELEMENTS SUCH AS
DOOWAN...

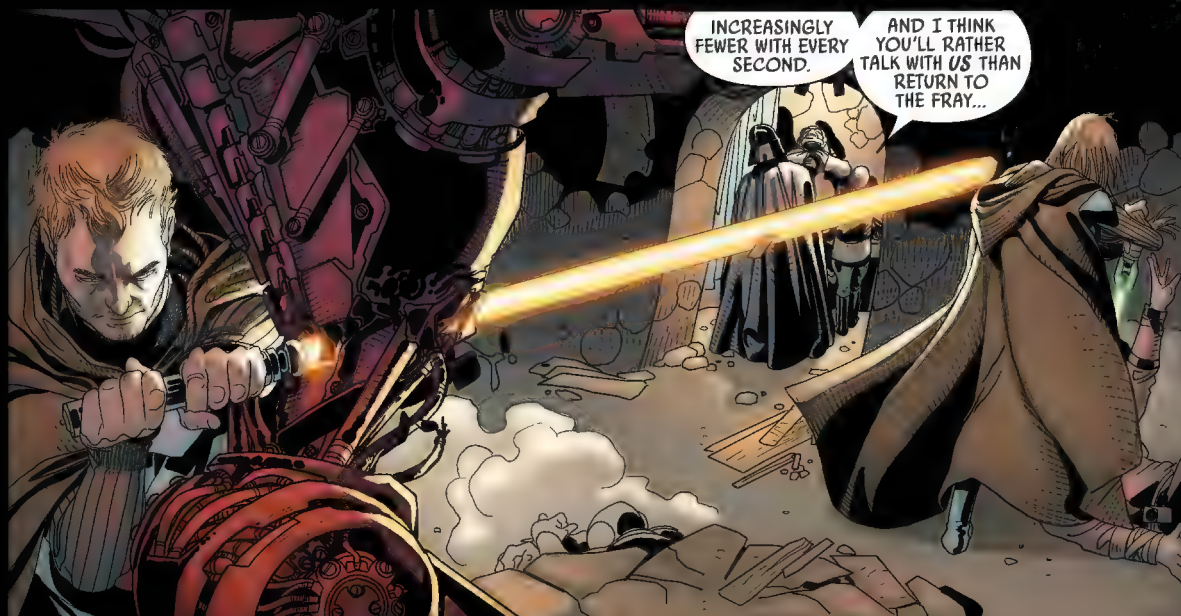
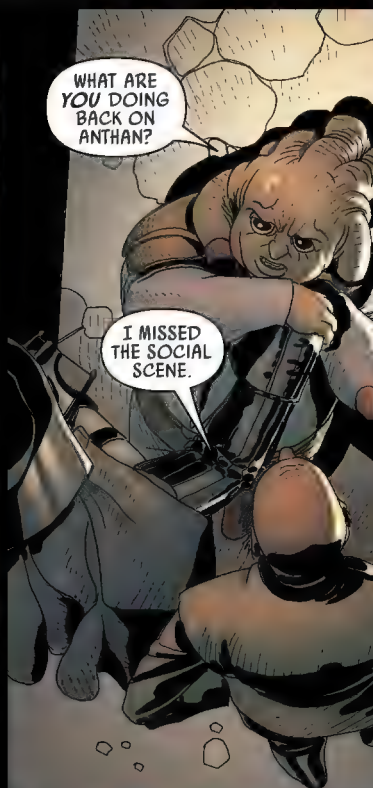
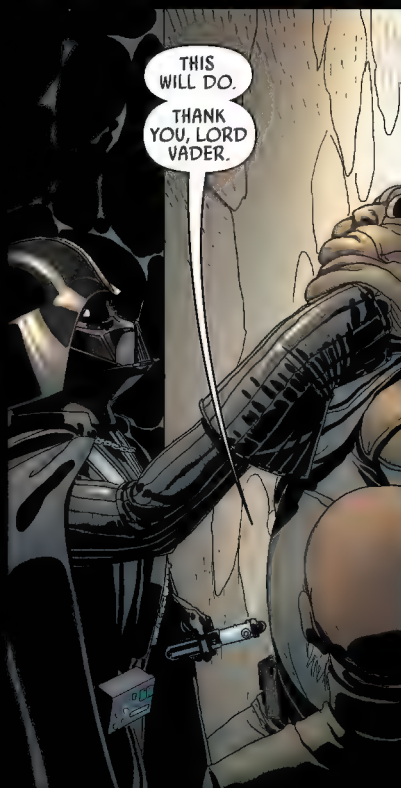
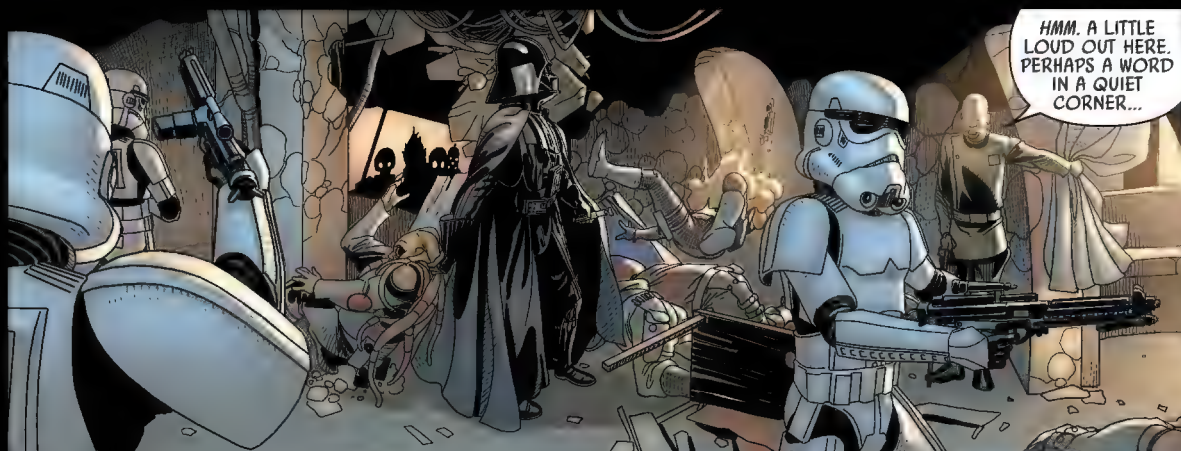
WE WILL
ACT QUIETLY.
IT IS BEST IF
WE DON'T...

...AH.











...WHAT
DO YOU
WANT?

THE
DRAGON. HIS
WHEREABOUTS.



I...
I...LET ME
THINK.



YOU ARE THINKING THAT
YOU MERELY NEED TO
DELAY FOR A FEW
MINUTES.

THEN *THEY*
WILL BE GONE
AND YOU CAN FEED
US YOUR PITIFUL
DECEPTIONS.



KNOW THIS: THE
CALLOW YOUTHS
WILL LEAVE.

I WILL
REMAIN.



THE DRAGON
IS OFF-PLANET
ON THE MID-
MOONS.

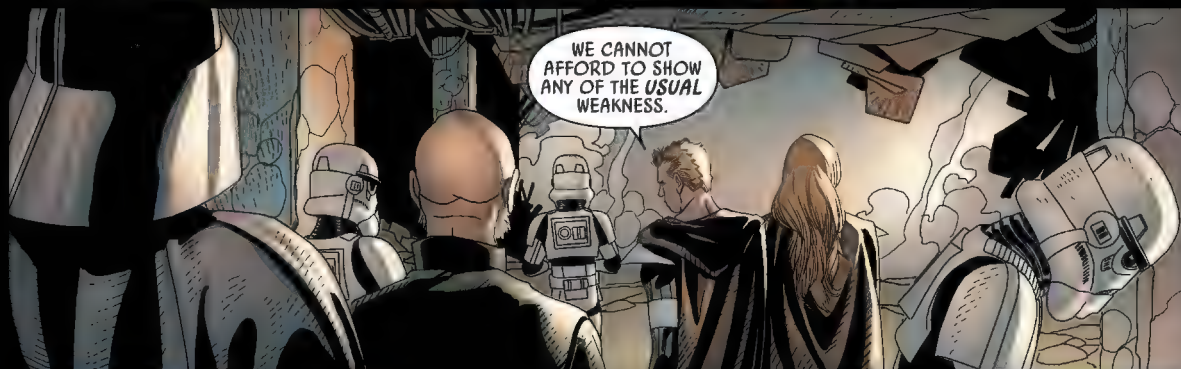
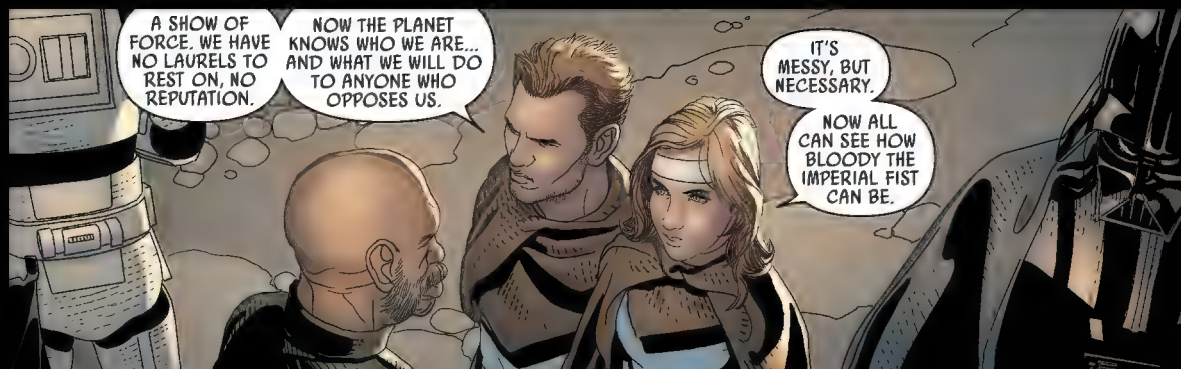
ANTHAN 12.



A LIE.









YOU'RE A MAN WHO
HAS BESTRODE THE
GALACTIC STAGE...
YET I AM TAKING
LEAD.

I COULDN'T
WISH FOR A BETTER
IMPLIED THREAT THAN
YOUR PRESENCE, LORD
VADER, BUT I CAN'T HELP
BUT WONDER ABOUT
YOUR MOTIVATION...



THE LAST
MAN TAGGE
SENT WAS A
TRAITOR.



I'M TRYING
TO ASCERTAIN
IF YOU ARE...
DANGEROUS.



OH, I
AM, LORD
VADER...



...BUT
ONLY TO THE
ENEMIES OF
THE EMPIRE.



ARK ANGEL
REQUESTING
LANDING....

I BELIEVE
A VESSEL SUCH
AS YOURS MUST
BE HERE FOR THE
TRADESMAN'S
ENTRANCE.

Anthani Prime.

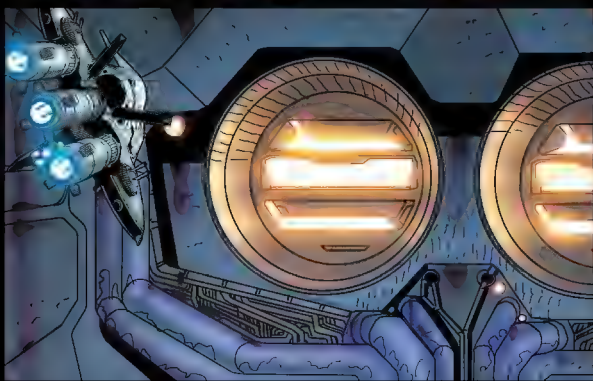


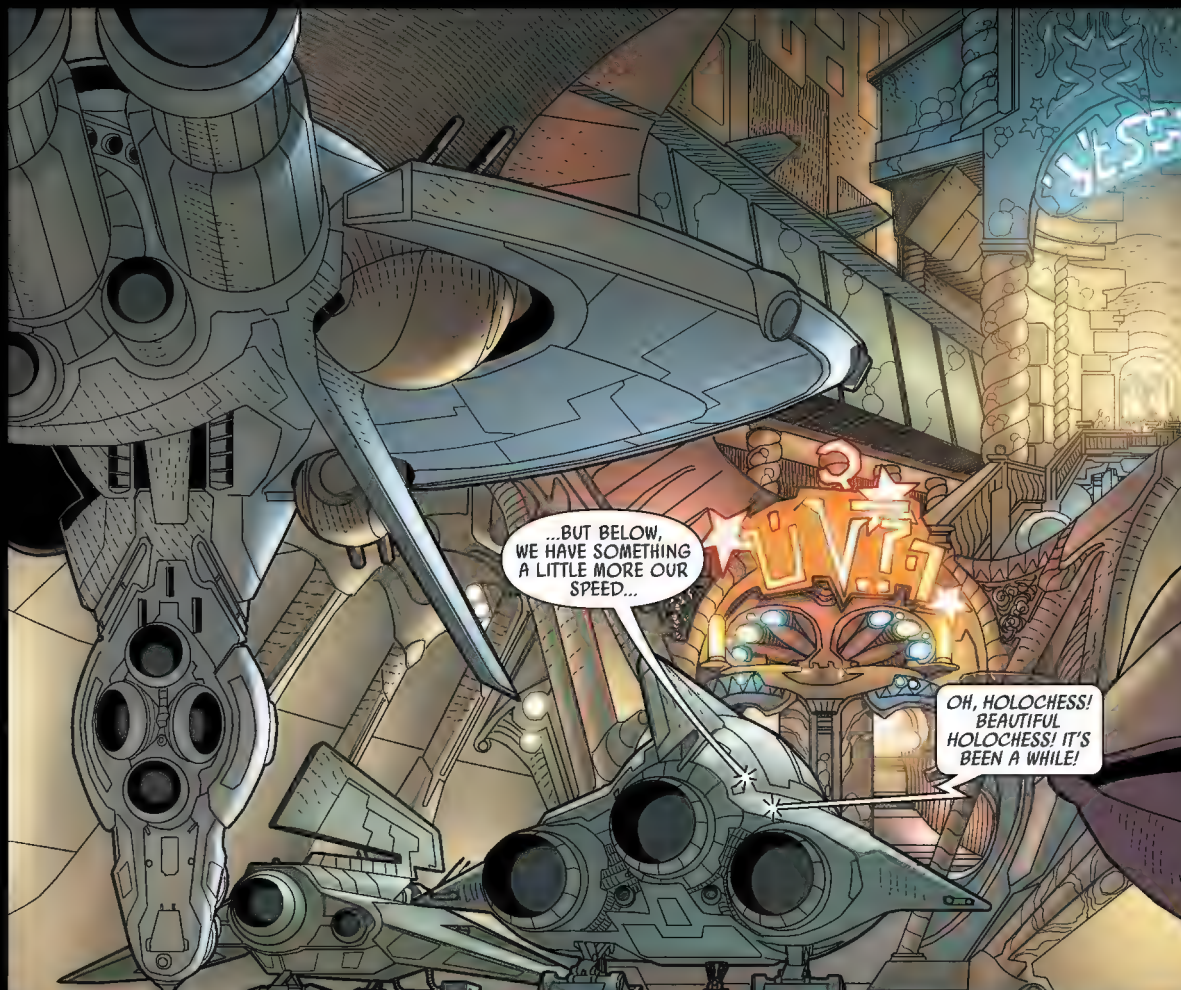
OH, HOW
RUDE.

LET'S KILL
THEM.

NO,
TRIPLE-ZERO.
WE SHOULD
KNOW OUR
PLACE.

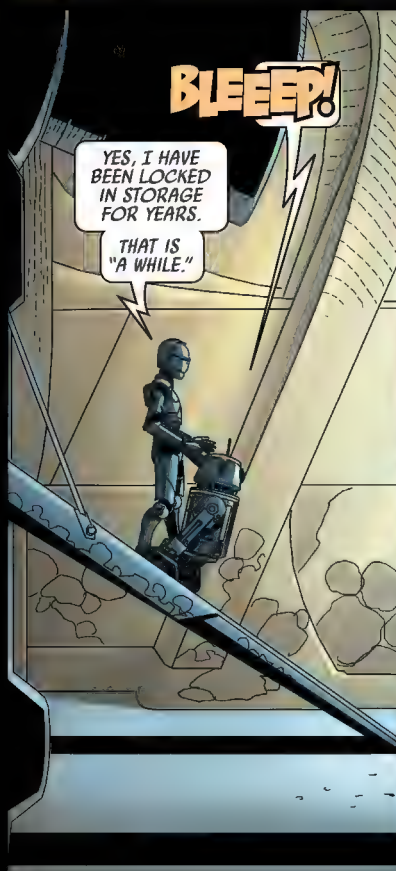
HOLIDAY
RESORT
FOR THE HYPER-
RICH UP
TOP...





...BUT BELOW,
WE HAVE SOMETHING
A LITTLE MORE OUR
SPEED...

OH, HOLOCHESS!
BEAUTIFUL
HOLOCHESS! IT'S
BEEN A WHILE!



BLEEP!

YES, I HAVE
BEEN LOCKED
IN STORAGE
FOR YEARS.

THAT IS
"A WHILE."



ARE
YOU ANY
GOOD?

MY SPECIALITIES ARE
ETIQUETTE, CUSTOMS,
TRANSLATION AND
TORTURE. A LOT OF
NON-ESSENTIAL
PROTOCOL DROID
PROGRAMMING WAS
JETTISONED TO FIT
THAT LAST ONE IN.

SO, NO, I'M
TERRIBLE.
MISTRESS APHRA.
BUT I DO LOVE
IT SO.



BLEEP!

THOUGH, YES, I
SUPPOSE I AM A
TERRIBLY SORE
LOSER.

AH, ANTE.
LONG
TIME!



FIRST, THAT'S "THE ANTE." SECONDLY, IT'S BEEN A LONG, LONG TIME SINCE YOU COULD AFFORD MY RATES, APHRA. BUT NOW YOU'VE CLEARED YOUR SLATE...

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? AND BEFORE YOU START... I STRESS I HAVE A LOT OF INFORMATION ABOUT SOME PARTICULARLY ELUSIVE INDIVIDUALS.



I KNOW. ANYTHING WORTH KNOWING HAS PASSED THROUGH THAT BIG BALD BRAIN OF YOURS.



COMMODORE TAHN.

THIS IS WHAT WE'VE GOT.



HMM...
...DONE.



ARE YOU SURE THIS IS THE RIGHT GUY?

MILITARY CLERK IN THE REPUBLIC ERA, BEFORE LEAVING SERVICE AND ENTERING THE FAMILY TRADE UPON THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER. RETIRED NOW FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS...

THERE ARE NO REFUNDS.

NO, HE'S THE ONE.

GIVE ME EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT.



THE EMPIRE WRITES BACK

DARTH VADER

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away is a lot easier to get to than you think – and we want to hear from you! Write us at StarWars@Marvel.com if you want to make it onto a future letters page. Don't forget to mark the letter "OK TO PRINT."

Dear Marvel,

Thank you for including Episodes I-III into your storyline about Darth Vader. Anakin, a.k.a. Vader, has always been my favorite character. I love his fall from grace as well as his rise out of the darkness and back into the light. The story of *Star Wars* made me want to be a writer when I grew up. I always thought it was odd that Anakin did nothing when he found out Luke was his kid. Not even question Palpatine how Padmé could have given birth if he had killed her. Now you guys showed that scene that I've been thinking of for so long. While I was reading the scene I got chills.

Stephen Bove

The response to that scene has been all kinds of overwhelming. As I've said elsewhere, my first cinema experience was going to see *Empire*. As such, writing the other half of the "Luke, I am your Father" experience is a once-in-a-career experience. I really can't believe Jason and I got to do that. It really is humbling. - Kieron

Hi there!

When I heard that Marvel had bought the *Star Wars* comics franchise from Dark Horse I was a little worried. My fear is now officially gone as I am loving the *Star Wars* and *Darth Vader* series. I grab them both every month taking care not to miss an issue. They are both great but I must confess I enjoy reading *Darth Vader* the most. I guess he's a guilty pleasure. I know I shouldn't like him but he's just so damn good at what he does. You guys have done a great job with Vader and it shows. I know Vader will eventually tear them apart, but will he be going up against his new rivals personally in combat? They have no knowledge of the Force and personally I would love to see Vader rip them to shreds, especially that cocky snot-nosed boy who I think Vader spared only to really feast on later.

Thanks,
Brian

Hmm. How to phrase this? Let's try: I think awesome lightsaber duels against cybernetic opponents are a safe bet for future episodes. That sounds like the sort of thing we'll do. - Kieron

I just wanted to express my gratitude on revitalizing my interest in *Star Wars* again. I was originally only going to purchase the first issue of *Darth Vader* but quickly found myself immersed into this well-written and beautifully illustrated story. You have brought more depth to this legendary character's story that just leaves me wanting more. Thank you for all your hard work. You are all clearly passionate about this story and I find it infectious.

Ken

Thank you. It's an easy book to be passionate about. I've been known to throw myself out of bed in the morning and run downstairs when I find myself thinking about a particularly amusing way for Vader to kill people. - Kieron

Hi,

It's a nice idea to have letters in your comic books. Stan the Man or George Lucas should answer them, right? ;-) Well, with *The Force Awakens* coming up and *Princess Leia* and *Darth Vader* the Force is strong this year. I hope Salvador Larroca will do more comics for you. By the way, I think *Darth Vader* is entertaining for adults, but I worry there will be some Jar Jar stories coming up sooner or later. Scary this is.

Take care
Stefan Svik

I hope Episode VIII ends with a credits sequence where they answer letters about *The Force Awakens*. - Kieron

Dear Star Warriors,

I want to say first off, thank you guys for creating some of the most awesome *Star Wars* stories I've read in a long time. I am particularly happy with the *Darth Vader* series where I am not only enjoying Kieron's and Sal's interpretations of Vader but his supporting cast as well. Oh, and I also really like the fight you guys had in the *Star Wars* ongoing between Luke and Boba Fett.

It's cool also that what you guys are doing is considered canon. That being said, it's nice to know how Vader learned how Luke was his son. If I have any concerns at all, it's that I hope that not all of Dark Horse's and the expanded novels' work will be for naught. I would particularly hate for us to lose Mara Jade and some of the other characters that were created.

Anyway, I wish you all the best. May the Force be with you.

Jason

We do talk to the Lucasfilm Story Group about Legends characters we could reintroduce. In short: you never know. - Kieron

Hey there!

I just finished *Darth Vader* #7, and I loved the quip from Triple-Zero at the beginning. Just when you thought that droid might say something sympathetic... WHAM! "Those poor droids." I laughed. To everyone working on the new *Star Wars* comics, great job so far, and keep up the good work! I can't wait to see where these books go next!

Chris

I'd say Triple-Zero writes himself, but that's risking Marvel saying, "Well, you

don't get paid for writing him then" and I like money. But he's a character who rarely is short of things to say in any situation. Mainly murderous ones. He's not a one-note character, of course. He has two notes – murder and torture. Also, holocaust. - Kieron

Hi guys!

I've been a hardcore *Star Wars* fan since I was a little kid, and I love the *Darth Vader* series. The job of my fellow Spanish artist Salvador Larroca with the Lord of the Sith is superb, and Gillen's plot is intriguing and perfectly suited to his mysterious and tragic personality. At first I was skeptical regarding Vader's visit to Tatooine (something taboo according to many books and comics due to his unbearably painful feelings attached to Anakin's previous life), but the way it's been handled in this new issue is satisfactory and credible. Obi-Wan is dead, he already knows that his son is alive, and now he can return to the sand planet even if he does not want to. The effort that he puts into trying to erase in any possible way (both physically and emotionally) the trace of his old master's existence reaches its highest point with the use of the molecular bomb. And also, we see the most badass Rodian ever! Looking forward to the next issue!

Thanks and keep up the great work,
Javier Peinado

Thanks, Javier. I agree with you on Tatooine, and wrote a lot about why I think it was absolutely essential that Vader did what he did. But never again, eh? - Kieron

NEXT:



10/7/15

BLACK MANTA EMPIRE



FINCH